

“Are You a Christian Hybrid?” Part 3 - 1 Corinthians 10:23-33 – September 13th, 2015

- Today's teaching will be part three of a series I've titled in the form of a question, “Are you a Christian Hybrid?”
- Because I'm using the metaphor of a hybrid, I suppose the question we really need to ask first is, what is a Christian Hybrid?
- A Christian Hybrid is someone who has blended, or if you prefer, has crossbred, the world's carnality with their Christianity.

- This was what the Corinthian's were doing, which is why the Apostle Paul has to confront them concerning their carnal idolatry.
- More specifically, they wanted it both ways by virtue of how they were, as Christians, also participating in the pagan practices.
- Enter today's text and with it our third and last question, which we have here in the remainder of this chapter from verses 23-33.

3. Are you glorifying God in all you do or are you stumbling others by what you do? (Verses 10:23-33)

23 “I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but not everything is constructive. 24 No one should seek their own good, but the good of others. 25 Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience, 26 for, “The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.” 27 If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. 28 But if someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, both for the sake of the one who told you and for the sake of conscience. 29 I am referring to the other person's conscience, not yours. For why is my freedom being judged by another's conscience? 30 If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for? 31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—33 even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

- v23-24 He tells them that no one should seek their own good but the good of others, as all things are lawful but not beneficial.
- v25-30 Paul then gets more specific by using the example of raising questions of conscience when invited to take part in a meal.
- v31-33 He seals the meal deal saying do everything to the glory of God so as to not stumble anyone that they might be saved.

- There are a couple of conclusions that we can draw from the text as it relates to what these Corinthian Christians were doing.
- First, it seems that they were seeking to please themselves by pursuing their own good at the expense of the good of others.
- Second, they pursued their freedoms in Christ to do anything they wanted in spite of the fact that they were stumbling others.

- I find it interesting that Paul would once again; use the example of eating meat offered to idols, which it seems was a big issue.
- This because, when the Corinthian Christians would go to the market to buy their meat, they were faced with this very dilemma.
- Some of them had the liberty to eat the meat offered to idols, and yet others who were weaker in their conscience saw it as sin.

- I realize the issue of meat offered to idols isn't an issue in our day today; however, you may be surprised to know that it may be.
- Let me explain, while I know we addressed it prior I think it would be good that we revisit what is known as Halal certified meat.
- For those who do not know what Halal means, it's an Arabic word permissible and it is sort of akin to kosher food for the Jews.

Halal refers to food, objects, or actions that are allowed in Islam. Among other things, halal meat must be killed with a sharp knife and drained of blood. No carnivorous animals, birds of prey, or meat contaminated with non-permissible substances can be used. ...The problem comes when Allah's name is pronounced over the meat during the butchering process. Many interpret this to mean the animal was sacrificed to a false god—an idol. <http://www.gotquestions.org/halal-food.html>

- At the risk of ruining your family BBQ's, a couple of weeks ago, James Menza, a brother in our church sent me these photo's.
- He works for a wholesale distributor and told me that half of his warehouse inventory is halal certified meat as pictured here.
- One photo is of Tyson chicken, and the other is a picture of Lamb racks, which are produced by a company out of California.

- Lest you think you're safe because you prefer beef to chicken or lamb, here is another photo of halal certified beef chuck eye.
- The reason I point this out is because the example that Paul uses in some ways hits closer to home as it relates to halal meat.
- Perhaps you'll indulge me for just a brief moment as I attempt to re-use Paul's example of someone inviting us over for a BBQ.

- Let's just say that they are going to BBQ the halal meat that was bought from the wholesaler that our brother James works for.
- Let's also say that according to Paul's example, the person that has invited you over to their home for the BBQ is not a believer.
- Let's now say that without raising any questions, you're about to sink your teeth into that juicy chuck eye steak hot off the grill.

- Then just as you're fork is about to place the most delicious steak you've ever tasted into your mouth someone whispers to you.
- They say to you this meat is halal meat that was offered to the false god Allah, and if that's not bad enough they drink wine too.
- What Paul is saying here is don't eat that meat, or for that matter, drink the wine, for the sake of the other person's conscience.

- Were you to do so, you would be stumbling the one with the weaker conscience, as you were seeking your good and not theirs.
- However, in the privacy of your own home you're free to BBQ that halal meat and eat as much as you want to the glory of God.
- The bottom line as Paul says it in verse 33 is I am not to seek my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

- Let me simply say in closing that the litmus test is this, does what I do glorify God, or does what I do end up stumbling others?
- I don't know of anyone who ever came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ because they witnessed a carnal hybrid Christian.
- Moreover, for those of us who are Christians, a carnal Christian life is far and away a very inferior way to live our Christian life.